



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Cooling Assistance Applications Now Being Accepted

Aid Available for Those Facing Economic Hardship

RICHMOND – With Virginia’s severe summer heat and humidity, staying cool is not a luxury, but rather a health and safety issue. The Commonwealth’s 120 [local departments of social services](#) are accepting Cooling Assistance applications from June 15 through Monday, August 15, as part of the Virginia Department of Social Services’ (VDSS) Energy Assistance Program.

“For many Virginians, the repair or purchase of a fan or air conditioner is financially out of reach, but needed for their health and well-being,” said VDSS Commissioner Martin D. Brown. “Just this month, we’ve seen homes without proper cooling in which the temperature inside the house would hit into the 90s – the same as outside.”

Cooling Assistance is available to households with **a child under 6-years-old, a person with disabilities, or an adult age 60 or older living in the home who meet the program’s income and eligibility requirements. To qualify for Cooling Assistance this year, the maximum gross monthly income (before taxes) for a one-person household is \$1,180 and \$2,422 for a household of four.**

Types of available cooling assistance include:

- Financial aid to help with electric bills to operate cooling equipment;
- Payment of security deposits for electricity to operate cooling equipment;
- Repair of a central air conditioning system or heat pump;
- Purchase of a whole-house fan, including ceiling or attic fans; and
- Purchase and installation of a window unit air conditioner for households without a working one.

Those deemed eligible may qualify for more than one type of assistance. The Energy Assistance Program is funded by the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program block grant; the amount Virginia receives to disburse to recipients varies from year-to-year depending on the appropriation made by Congress. Assistance is available until funds are depleted.

The Cooling Assistance component served more than 70,000 Virginia households last year. To learn more visit <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea/cooling/index.cgi>. Families and individuals must apply at their local department of social services by August 15.

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